

CLAIMS

Please accept the attached set of claims showing the status of all claims and explicitly showing amendments to claims 11, 14 and 15, cancellation of claim 12, and the addition of new claims 17-20.

1-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a nonwoven comprising the steps of:

blending a plurality of core/sheath fibers with a plurality of matrix fibers;

layering a web of the blended fibers into a planar shape having an x-axis, ~~an y-axis~~ a y-axis, and ~~an z-axis~~ a z-axis;

needling the web of fibers at an angle being from about 30° to about 60° to the z-axis in the x-z plane such that an integral mat is formed.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Original) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the step of needling the web of fibers at an angle includes the angle being about 45° from the z-axis in the x-z plane.

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the step of needling the web of fibers includes also needling the fibers substantially parallel to the z ~~axis~~ z-axis of the web.

15. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the sheath of the core/sheath fibers ~~comprise~~ comprises a low melt semi-crystalline polyester.

16. (Original) The method according to Claim 15, further including the step of molding the needled web of fibers into a molded component part with the application of heat and pressure.

17. (New) A method of forming a nonwoven comprising the steps of:

blending a plurality of core/sheath fibers with a plurality of matrix fibers wherein said core/sheath fibers include low melt semi-crystalline polyester sheathed fibers and said matrix fibers include higher melting point polyester fibers;

layering a web of the blended fibers into a planar shape having an x-axis, a y-axis, and a z-axis;

needling the web of fibers at an angle and also parallel to the z-axis in the x-z plane such that an integral mat is formed.

18. (New) The method according to Claim 17, wherein the step of needling the web of fibers at an angle includes the angle being from about 30° to about 60° from the z-axis in the x-z plane

19. (New) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the step of needling the web of fibers at an angle includes the angle being about 45° from the z-axis in the x-z plane.

20. (New) The method according to Claim 17, further including the step of molding the needled web of fibers into a molded component part with the application of heat and pressure.